

2022
NATIONAL SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS
MILTON F. LUNCH ETHICS CONTEST

Ethical Issue #1: Campaign Contributions

Facts:

Engineer A is the president of a consulting engineering firm, Company XYZ, that provides engineering services for public entities in its region. A significant percentage of the firm's work over the past ten years has been on behalf of County X. Each year, County X issues Requests for Proposals for upcoming projects. Company XYZ is regularly awarded one or more projects by the County. County Commissioner C (one of a commission of three) is facing a hotly contested race for reelection. County Commissioner C broadly solicits campaign contributions, pointing each potential donor to state statutes that provide the legal limits on campaign contributions. Engineer A decides to make a personal contribution in the amount of \$2,500 to County Commissioner C's campaign, an amount that is within the statutory guidelines for campaign contributions. During the campaign, the list of contributors and amounts is made public as required by state law. Engineer B, who works for a firm that regularly competes with Company XYZ for County projects, notices that Engineer A's contribution was one of the larger amounts on County Commissioner C's donor list, and files a complaint with the State PE Board.

Questions:

1. Was Engineer A's campaign contribution ethical?
2. Was Engineer B's complaint to the State PE Board ethical?